Edgbaston June 9/78

I have been very
long in finding time to write to you, but have
been extremely busy, & the thought that
a letter to go a long way ought to be a
long letter, & worth sending so far, is apt,
however unwarrantably, to act as an
unconscious deterrent from sitting down
to write it, especially when business that
presses for instant dispatch, is waiting
at my elbow.

I must tell you at once that I
received the paper in which I read an
passage marked, which caught my eye
at the top of a column. I read it
wondering, with a sense of previous,
but unrecognized, familiarity with the
words, at first. I soon had to acknow-
ledge its paternity, & was only surprised
that in the thronging interests of your
busy community you had thought worth
record under the honored auspices of your

received it & [illegible] the Annual Meeting of the Women's Suffrage Association & had the pleasure of telling them about it, & of sending the Address. Mrs. Ellis Yates Lee, secretary to the Association, sends her kind regards to you.

Mrs. Taylor
Mrs. Priestley
Mrs. Estlin
Mrs. Carpenter
Mrs. Tagart
Mrs. Thompson
Mrs. Bracken

commendation, the history of our little movements here. With respect to the personal matters, I suppose Mrs Howe will quite understand that my opinion of her was written without any thought of its being published. I expect she must be, by this time, accustomed to the involuntary extortion of admiration inseparable, I imagine, from her public career. Anyhow, I hope she would not object to my expressing to you, as between friends, the impression she produced on me, written without the faintest suspicion that it would ever attain a wider publicity than the range of private correspondence.

About public matters I could, of course, only feel glad that you could find in my letter anything that you thought might be valuable to your fellow citizens. For myself I have a great belief in the greatness of God &

Ms-A.1.2 v. 40, p. 31A

provincial doings, & believe that for the sake of the principles involved, the surmounting of apparent difficulties, the evolution of spirited independence, there are lessons to be learned from any village where self government exists, as instructive perhaps as when it appears on its largest stage. The longer I live, the more I see of the wider aspects of affairs, the more deeply do I get this belief in self government ingrained into me. We have had our eyes widely opened lately to the fact that we are not as much self governed as we thought we were. We fancied, "good easy men," that we had a prophet for our head, — a mere passive figure-head, whom it might perhaps, with all its belongings, be costly to feed annually, but which was ~~as powder~~ on the

whole, less expensive & Rup, might
than it would be to substitute periodically
head, & alter the name of our ship
from "Monarchy" to "Republic", while
the ship, its course, its crew, its
sailing & its speed, would undergo
no change by the operation. But the
last six months have undeceived us.
It has been a grave crisis in our
national history. For it has shown
that we are still under practical
despotic & irresponsible rule. The
Queen had been content for many
many years to reign, without ruling.
Under the stress of circumstances, she
has entered on a course which many
many of us put the question to ourselves
"If the monarch ✱ can rule as well
as reign, we do not wish the form
why retain the latter?" & further -
"if ruling & reigning are inseparable,
the evils possible from the first outweigh the

the benefits probable from the last." Thus,
I believe, the Queen of that "Asian
mystery" Beaconsfield, with the
inversionary prospect of the next heir
to the throne,
have done more to hasten a Republic
in England, by accustoming the minds
of thoughtful, law-abiding people
to the idea, than any amount of
demagogic force could have effected.
You, the U. S., are the greatest
stumbling block in our way. People
seem to have a notion that to achieve
a Republic, we must perforce
embody in it the faults of any
existing Republic. You has shown
us, in spite of all defects, the con-
stitution under which, I suppose,
individual liberty & the powers of
individual development have attained
the grandest growth shown in any
nation, notwithstanding certain

obvious faults not inherent in our constitution. We have resisted, & finally abolished, the evil of slavery, enough to have ruined any people that had not a marvellous vital power. Now & then (just now especially) there are times, as there must be in the life of every nation, when it may seem that the national sanction is being given to wrong & injustice. But I tell who believe that free discussion must educe what is best in human nature, that the best must prevail in the long run, the need seems imperative, absolutely essential, that discussion must be free & that the course of national action must be the outcome of this discussion. This surely is the spirit of republicanism. But when we urge this, the invariable answer is "look at America. Do you want penal judges? is not the

municipality of Brooklyn than that of New York?"

Do you not think that England ought & will grow into the purest form of republic? I cannot see why a nation which evolves an altered form of constitution should not avoid the faults of those who have led to frame our profit by their experience.
also avoid. I can conceive no finer material for the evolution of the republican idea than modern England.

A people law abiding, constitution respecting; with restless aspiration, yet with, too, the stability of cultured civilization; with the garnered experience of centuries of probationary freedom, & (just now) with the longing to see that freedom perfected. We thought it was potentially achieved. We loved our nominal Monarchy because we thought it was a virtual republic. We have come to desire a nominal republic because we

have found it was a virtual despotism.

I am sure I am not writing enigmas to you. If a Queen & Prime Minister can plunge a nation into war, without — nay even against — its consent, is not that a despotism? We have been within an ace of that. If the nation had been a degree more apathetic, if one of the thousand accidents of life had disabled Gladstone for a time, or might have been at war, under the personal government of a dotard Queen & a melodramatic Premier.

But I have written too long. Our history is so interesting that to one capable of appreciating it I cannot but dilate, when I begin. — If you or Jane can have time I trust I shall be so glad to hear. Mary sister sends her most kind remembrance both, as indeed do I. My younger sister is still in Van Couver, & I fear will remain there till next Spring. She likes the climate & is happy there with friends. — I was greatly interested in your speech about Women's Suffrage. Soon after I